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10/19/77
United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

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October 19, 1977

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/TPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part () In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

The Honorable Cyrus R. Vance
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In view of your visit to Argentina next month, we want to express our concerns about the human rights situation there.

As you know, there has been little significant progress in reducing human rights violations and restoring Constitutional guarantees despite the marked decrease in terrorist and subversive activities. Indeed, the Argentine Government has largely eliminated the terrorist threat, at least in comparison to what it was a year ago. Nevertheless, the disappearances and arrests continue at a steady and alarming rate.

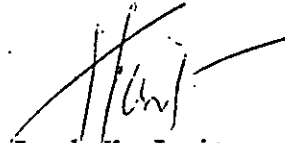
In this regard, we wish to draw attention to the particular case of Jacob Timmerman who, until the time of his arrest, was Editor-in-Chief of the Buenos Aires daily La Opinion. Mr. Timmerman was arrested earlier this year, but, as you know, has not been brought to trial. The circumstances and reasons for Mr. Timmerman's arrest have never been explained in a satisfactory way. We are inclined to believe that Mr. Timmerman has been detained primarily because of his role as an outspoken editor, particularly on human rights matters.


We hope that when you and members of your party meet with President Videla that you will convey to him and members of the Argentine Government our deep concern about the Timmerman case and the highly unsatisfactory human rights situation as we perceive it. Moreover, we ask that you express our doubts about any meaningful improvement in our bilateral relations with Argentina in the absence of significant progress in the human rights area.

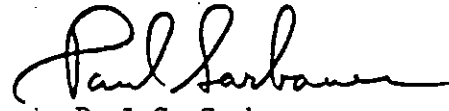
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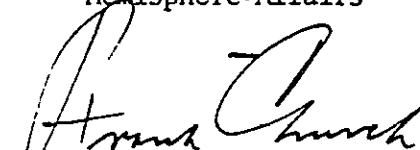
We appreciate very much your conveying these sentiments on our behalf to the authorities in Argentina. We are sending a copy of this letter to Ambassador Aja Espil.

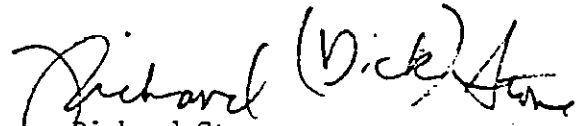
Sincerely,


Jacob K. Javits
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Western
Hemisphere Affairs


Clifford P. Case


Paul S. Sarbanes
Chairman
Subcommittee on Western
Hemisphere Affairs


Frank Church


Richard Stone

cc: Amb. Aja Espil